of claims. As per the prescribed procedure, the PF authorities are liable for disciplinary action for delay in settlement of PF Claims. Recently, through an amendment in the Scheme, Commissioners have been made personally accountable for delay, beyond the prescribed limit, in the disposal of the claims.

***Nuclear Power Projects***

102. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the delay on the party of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) in giving clearance to two nuclear power projects has resulted in heavy cost escalation of about Rs. 3,000 crore;

(b) if so, the reasons for delay in according clearance; and

(c) the steps being taken to expedite the matter by the AERB?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) to (c) There has been no delay on the part of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) in giving clearance to the nuclear power projects. All safety related matters involve many detailed calculations and analyses which have to be inevitably gone through. All such matters are given priority by those concerned, including the Nuclear Power Corporation and the AERB.

**Standards for Soft Drinks**

103. SHRI RAM NAIK : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "soft drink norms lack punch-study" appearing in 'The Times of India,' dated August 27, 1997;

(b) whether the statutory standards for soft drinks in India as laid down by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and the Prevention of Food and Adulteration Act (PFA) are very lenient as compared to those in developed countries;

(c) if so, the comparison between our norms and norms prescribed by the developed countries; and

*(d) the action taken/proposed to be taken to make our norms more stringent?*

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY) : (a) to (d) Yes Sir.

The press report refers to the study carried out by Consumer Education & Research Centre (CERC), Ahmedabad on ten different brands of carbonated water available in Indian market.

A comparative chart on limits of metallic contaminants prescribed under prevention of Food Adulteration Rules and specified by the Bureau of Indian Standards and the Limits specified by Newzealand, Australia, U.K. & Canada for carbonated water as brough out by the CERC, Ahmadabad is given in the Statement attached. The report has also quoted findings of caffeine content in two brands of carbonated water as marketed in India, Australia, U.K. & USA. Caffeine content in beverages marketed in India has been found to be well within the max. limit prescribed under PFA Rules, 1955.

According to the report, the limit for copper is more stringent in India while it is the same as in other countries for Zinc. However, in the case of lead & arsenic, the limit is lower in India.

STATEMENT

*Comparative Statement of Metallic Contaminants in Carbonated Water as reported by C.E.R.C.*

| | P.F.A. | B.I.S. | U.K. | Canada | Australia | New Zealand |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Lead (max. in ppm*) | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 1.2 | 0.2 |
| Zinc (max. in ppm) | 5.0 | — | 5.0 | 5.0 | — | 5.0 |
| Copper (max. in ppm) | 1.5 | 1.5 | 2.0 | 2.0 | — | 2.0 |
| Arsenic (max. in ppm) | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.15 | 0.2 |

*ppm = Parts per million (mg/kg)